

Natural Resources Advisory Board Minutes
January 25, 2011

Vice Chairman Kernan opened the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Roll Call/Introductions:

Joe Pearson	Brian Anderson	Dick Wren
Dale Stewart	Gene Abbott	Terri Treacy
Pat Kernan		

IDNR Staff:

Marc Miller, by phone	Deborah Stone	Tom Dilello
Mick Rosendahl	Dave Sellman	Sue Eubanks
Kathy Barker	Jan Nation	Tim Schweizer
Tami Evans		

Quorum was met.

Dale Stewart motioned to accept the January 25, 2011 agenda; Joe Pearson provided the second.

Joe Pearson motioned to adopt the June 29, 2010 and the October 2010 minutes; Dale Stewart provided the second – no opposition was heard. This adoption included one addition, at the request of Chairman Emken, for the June 29, 2010 minutes. Chairman Emken asked that the minutes reflect her opposition, as an official measurer for the Pope & Young Club, to the committee recommendation of allowing crossbow use beyond what the law already allows.

OSLAD Grant Recommendations – Brian Anderson – The subcommittee, consisting of Brian, Claudia, Dale, Joe and Tim met on December 10, 2010 to hear 45 potential grantees make presentations for an OSLAD grant. \$11 million has been appropriated for OSLAD projects, which is comparatively small compared to other years. The presentations were outstanding. There was an increase in passive game areas - game tables, horseshoe pits, splash pads and water requests. There were only two requests for land acquisitions.

The subcommittee recommends funding projects 1-30, 32 and 33. Project 31 appears to be covered under project 21. Any remaining balance of funds, approximately \$577,900, is recommended to fund project 34, should they be willing to accept and implement a partially funded project. Project 34 requested \$750,000; if they don't believe they can implement a partially funded project, the subcommittee recommends funding projects 1-33, 35 and 38. Should there be more than \$11 million; the subcommittee recommends additional projects 37, 39 and 43. Dale Stewart provided the

motion to accept the recommendations of the subcommittee; Joe Pearson provided the second, no opposition was heard. These recommendations will be forwarded on to the Director.

Boat Access Grants – Grants Staff – Mick Rosendahl – The boat access grant program is one of the Department's oldest but smallest grant programs. Annually there is \$725,000 available per year for this program. This program looks at basic boat access, or support components such as parking, lighting, docking and restrooms – not picnic areas. Criteria for this program include the number of launches on weekends, using county registration numbers and county population. 16 applications were reviewed in house, four are being recommended for funding. Dale Stewart motioned to accept the recommendations made by grants staff; Joe Pearson provided the second. No opposition was heard.

Land Acquisition Partnership Case Study - Todd Rettig & Connie Waggoner, Realty & Environmental Planning and Aaron Kuehl, Pheasants Forever. Given the difficult fiscal climate, efforts to secure acquisitions are necessary through leveraging state funding, looking for individuals who are willing to bargain sale and through partnerships. IDNR, Pheasants Forever, Grand Victoria, Clean Energy Foundation and the US Fish & Wildlife have a unique partnership that has preserved 1,000 acres in Knox County known as the Forever Fields Project. This unique partnership allowed Pheasants Forever to purchase and bargain sale this property to IDNR. IDNR was able to secure funding from the Illinois Habitat Fund with grants from Pheasant Forever and the Clean Energy Foundation. The State will receive 75% Pittman Robertson matching grant money that will be put back into the habitat fund to use on future acquisitions. A management agreement between Pheasants Forever & IDNR, with grants from Grand Victoria Foundation will help begin the restoration and habitat improvement. The property will be managed for bird hunting and fits nicely with the state's wildlife action plan.

Aaron Kuehl added that this is an exciting project and partnership for Pheasants Forever. Partnerships are how projects get done. Pheasants Forever has 60 chapters in Illinois and they are energized and ready to partner. The Forever Fields Project is an amazing project and this specific property resembles the properties in the Dakota's. There is a lot of opportunity on this property.

Proposal For Public Recreational Access Task Force – Marc Miller – Public recreational access was one of three top priorities that came from Conservation congress. Recreational access is a key issue that will affect the department's long term viability. Director Miller stated that he is interested in forming a small group of citizens that could take this recommendation, fine tune it and affect change to increase public recreational access. This group would work with private landowners to seek ways to provide access. Illinois ranks 48 out of 50 in public land availability and acquiring land would be ideal but not likely. The Illinois Public Recreational Access Program was introduced this past fall, with help of farm bill money to open up limited access in specific areas – primarily focusing on youth programs.

The director asked for two to three volunteers from the board, and will provide additional information in the near future. It is anticipated that legislators along with representatives from conservation and farm groups be included. Brian Anderson added that he would be interested in participating.

DNR Re-branding – Marc Miller – An informational sheet on DNR's rebranding efforts was passed out to the board. This effort helps tell our story, which is critical to DNR's survival. This informational piece is a collection of the economic impacts and was laid out during a budget exercise as a framework to show what DNR provides to the public. The board was asked to think about any ideas in terms of communication efforts on ways of getting our message out; suggestions can be sent to Debbie.

IDNR has been recognized for its budget submission as being one of the best. The director added that through DNR's communication committee and its efforts, we are stepping up efforts to get consistent information out not just through press releases but also by the web, on-line and externally. Pat Kernan suggested subliminal advertising, such as a bullet point about DNR's efforts on the top and bottom the hunting & fishing guides or other printed materials. Terri suggested a catchy phrase that encapsulates the essence of a DNR story.

Board Comments:

Dick Wren added that the Hall of Fame is March 26th; everyone is invited to attend.

Terri Treacy asked if the OSLAD application process has a provision for landscaping – are they required to be native or at least not invasive. Debbie added that Grants staff would need to provide her with the answer.

Terri also asked if an entity is building a boat dock, are they required to have signage about invasive species that could be spread by boaters. Debbie added that Grants staff would need to provide the answer.

Brian stated that the Natural History survey received funding for aquatic invasive nuisance species. One of the grants is for development of signage and materials. The Natural History Survey could partner with IDNR on these issues.

Pat Kernan asked for a presentation on the charitable arm of the DNR. The director added that we would have someone at the next meeting.

Public Comments:

None